

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 INT-05 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EFIS, CA
SUBJECT: 1978 INTERIM FISHERIES AGREEMENT - PARLIAMENTARY
QUESTIONS AND PRESS COVERAGE

1. US COURT DECISION REGARDING 1978 INTERIM FISHERIES AGREEMENT WAS A MAJOR TOPIC IN HOUSE OF COMMONS QUESTION PERIOD MAY 8. NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP) LEADER ED BROADBENT SOUGHT ASSURANCES THAT SO LONG AS CANADIAN FISHERMEN WERE PROHIBITED "FROM ENJOYING THE RIGHT THEY HAVE UNDER THE TREATY TO FISH OFF THE U.S. COAST", SIMILAR ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN TO RESTRICT AMERICAN FISHERMEN FROM FISHING OFF COAST OF CANADA. IN RESPONSE MINISTER FOR FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENT ROMEO LE BLANC POINTED OUT INJUNCTION HAD BEEN STAYED UNTIL MAY 12 TO PERMIT APPEAL TO BE MADE. FURTHERMORE HE WOULD PREFER TO AWAIT OUTCOME OF MEETING IN OTTAWA THIS WEEK BETWEEN THE TWO SPECIAL NEGOTIATORS, AMBASSADORS CUTLER AND CADIEUX BEFORE CONSIDERING RECIPROCAL ACTION.

2. QUESTION OF RECIPROCAL ACTION WAS PURSUED BY MP MUNRO (ESQUIMO-SAANICH) TO WHICH LE BLANC REPLIED "MR. SPEAKER, UNCLASSIFIED

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OBVIOUSLY WE SHOULD LOOK INTO THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SITUATION WHERE THERE WOULD BE NO RECIPROCAL AGREEMENT, BUT I FEEL THAT IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAT IN COMING DAYS WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON THE POSSIBILITY OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT. IT WOULD BE VERY NAIVE TO BELIEVE, AS DO SOME COMMENTATORS AND EVEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY, THAT FORBIDDING ACCESS TO ALL WATERS WOULD SOLVE

EVERYTHING. ON THE CONTRARY, WE WOULD THEN HAVE A SITUATION WHERE RELATIONS BETWEEN CANADIAN AND AMERICAN FISHERMEN WOULD BE MOST COMPLEX, AND TO WHICH BOTH MIGHT FIND SERIOUS DISADVANTAGES."

3. IN RESPONSE TO ANOTHER OPPOSITION MEMBER'S QUESTION, LE BLANC ADDED "NOTHING HAS GONE WRONG YET. THERE WAS AN INJUNCTION, AND THAT WILL BE DEALT WITH ACCORDING TO THE NORMAL PROCESS. AS I SAID IN ANSWER TO AN EARLIER QUESTION, THE TWO SPECIAL NEGOTIATORS WHO SIGNED THIS RECOMMENDATION TO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE MEETING THIS WEEK. THE HON. MEMBER SHOULD ALSO KNOW THAT THE AMERICAN AGREEMENT HAS TO BE RATIFIED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THIS HAS NOT YET BEEN DONE AND THAT, OBVIOUSLY, POSES SOME DIFFICULTIES WHEN THE ADMINISTRATION GOES BEFORE THE COURTS."

4. CBC AND CTV NATIONAL TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAMS GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO REPERCUSSIONS OF COURT DECISION ON INTERIM AGREEMENT INCLUDING CLIPS OF CUTLER TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE. FRONTPAGE ARTICLE IN MAY 8 TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL BY ROBERT WILLIAMSON STATED REACTION OF SOME BC FISHERMEN TO THE COURT DECISION WAS TO DEMAND RETALIATION BY CANADA ON THE SCALE OF CLEARING ALL U.S. BOATS OUT OF FISHING WATERS ON THE CANADIAN EAST AND WEST COASTS. ARTICLE REPORTS BC PREMIER WILLIAM BENNETT SENT UNCLASSIFIED

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A TELEGRAM TO PM TRUDEAU MAY 7 DEMANDING "DECISIVE ACTION" TO COUNTER IMPACT OF COURT ORDER.

5. ACCORDING TO THIS ARTICLE THERE WAS "DEEPENING CANADIAN DISENCHANTMENT" WITH THE APPLICATION OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT, "CANADIAN SOURCES BELIEVE THE U.S. FEDERAL AUTHORITIES MUST APPEAL THE COURT DECISION, AS THEY HAVE INDICATED THEY WILL, TO MAINTAIN CREDIBILITY IN THEIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH CANADA. ATTEMPTS ARE ALSO LIKELY TO SPEED UP CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE 1978 AGREEMENT. IN THE MEANTIME, THE COURT DECISION HAS HEIGHTENED THE CYNICISM AND MISTRUST ABOUT FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS BY SOME IN THE CANADIAN FISHING INDUSTRY WHO RECALL HOW LAST YEAR'S INTERIM AGREEMENT BROKE DOWN AS CANADIAN BOATS WERE FORCED TO LEAVE THE WASHINGTON COAST AFTER A REGIONAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL REVISED CATCH LIMITS. THIS PROMPTED CANADA TO RETALIATE WITH A BAN ON U.S. SHRIMP BOATS."

6. COMMENT: THERE HAS BEEN NO MENTION IN THESE PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGES AND TV/PRESS REPORTS OF CANADIAN FAILURE TO CLOSE SWIFTSURE BANK SALMON TROLL FISHERY, AS REQUESTED

BY U.S. UNDER TERMS OF 1978 INTERIM AGREEMENT, AND
IMPACT THIS FAILURE HAS HAD ON THE CHAIN OF EVENTS LEADING
TO COURT DECISION. AS RESULT CANADIAN PUBLIC IS RECEIVING
A RATHER DISTORTED AND ONE-SIDED PICTURE OF THE SITUATION.
USICA OTTAWA IS UNDERTAKING TO CONVEY U.S.
SIDE OF STORY TO CANADIAN MEDIA. DUEMLING

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